

at the same time that that is going on, our health agencies are allowing mercury to be put into almost every vaccine an adult gets and many of the vaccines that children get.

Since the late 1920s and early 1930s, there has been a product called Thimerosal put into many of the vaccines, in fact, most of the vaccines that people get today. Thimerosal is 50 percent ethyl mercury, and mercury is toxic to the neurological system of the human being. Yet we have talked about this for 4, 5, 6 years now, and we cannot get the mercury out of the vaccines. It is being used as a preservative.

The interesting thing about it is that it has never been tested. You might say it was tested back in 1929, because they said they tested it on 27 people that had meningitis. All of them died from meningitis, but none of them died from the mercury they were being injected with. But they died anyhow from the meningitis. There wasn't enough time to find out about the neurological problems that might ensue because they were having mercury injected into their bodies.

Our children today, before they go to the first grade, get between 25 and 30 shots. Most of those shots used to contain mercury. Now there are only about three or four that contain mercury. Nevertheless, it has caused severe neurological problems in children.

We have gone from where 1 in 10,000 children were found to be autistic to one in 166. It is an absolute epidemic. We have also seen a tremendous increase in people that have Alzheimer's and other neurological diseases. Yet we continue to allow our health agencies to allow the pharmaceutical industry to put mercury into the vaccines going into every single human being into this country, and in particular our military personnel overseas.

Now we are hearing about the bird flu, Mr. Speaker, and we are going to spend billions of dollars preparing this country for a possible bird flu epidemic. That means they are going to create vaccines, and those vaccines, in all probability, will have mercury in them, which means that every single person that is vaccinated with the bird flu vaccine will probably be getting Thimerosal in them, which is 50 percent ethyl mercury.

It does cause severe neurological problems when it is given over a long period of time. Your brain accumulates this mercury. It doesn't chelate out of the body in a very efficient way. So if you get 10 shots, that mercury stays and keeps building up, and it gets worse and worse as time goes by. The health agencies know this is a problem, and yet we continue to allow mercury to be put into these vaccines.

So today, since the people of this country are being warned about not eating too much fish that contains mercury like tuna and so forth, I think it is high time that the health agencies of this country get the mercury out of all vaccines that are being injected

into children and adults in this country because of the danger to their neurological system. It is extremely important.

It can be done. This Thimerosal is supposedly a preservative. If we go to single shot vials, which don't cost much more than the multi-shot vials being used, you can take the mercury out of them because you don't need that preservative in there, you don't need that kind of purifying agent, if you will, in that vaccine.

It is extremely important, Mr. Speaker, that we get mercury out of all vaccines. Right now, with the warnings being given to people not to eat too much fish with mercury in them, it is high time our health agencies get mercury out of all vaccines.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURGESS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RAISING CONCERNS ABOUT UNITED ARAB EMIRATES' TAKING OVER U.S. PORTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the House's attention a transaction that is being contemplated on five of our major ports, five important ports of entry in the United States. New Orleans, Miami, Newark, Philadelphia and New York are all being considered as an asset to be transferred to the United Arab Emirates soon after review of the transactional details.

I am concerned about this transaction for several reasons. First and foremost, it has occurred under what is called Council for Foreign Investments, as it is known, chaired by the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Snow, and multiple agencies of the United States Government to review transactions launched by foreign entities to purchase assets here in the United States.

Why am I concerned about the United Arab Emirates' ownership and potential management of our ports of entry, these five strategic ports? For many reasons.

Just yesterday, it was reported that the United Arab Emirates was in negotiations urging a more robust trade relationship with Iran. Just yesterday, they were making a decision to move

forward with a more robust trading platform with Iran.

I am sure most of our colleagues realize that in recent days we have gone to enormous lengths to convince our allies and our friends around the world to put pressure on Iran in order to reduce the likelihood of their using nuclear weapons or building nuclear capabilities. So at a time when we are trying to get our international partners to put pressure on Iran, the United Arab Emirates is doing the exact opposite by encouraging and engaging in trade debate with Iran.

The United Arab Emirates has worked with us since 9/11 on helping us fight the War on Terror, but it has always been well known and documented that a number of the terrorist activity planning and financing was taking place in these very countries that would now have control of our ports.

In this country, if we were asked to turn over our airport security to another foreign national, people would be rightfully outraged. But in this particular transaction, we cannot seem to get any information as to what are the requirements of security, what are the requirements for people and personnel who would be employed there, what are the kind of safeguards of inspection of cargo.

I have long stated my concern on port security. I feel we have failed to adequately secure cargo coming into this country. Now I am told in my inquiry to Secretary Snow that they couldn't really answer any of my questions yesterday in the committee because it was a more secretive or at least private transaction that could not be commented on.

As a Member of Congress, it bothers me that we have a transaction being considered and contemplated where we have no information provided to Members of Congress.

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Tomorrow, President Bush travels to my home State of Florida, and he will visit the port of Tampa, not a port being considered for sale, but a port nonetheless, a very important port of commerce in the State of Florida.

I hope the President as he flies to Florida will contemplate the utilization of the law known as Exxon-Florio, which allows the President to intercede and stop a transfer of assets if it is reflected to be of some national security concern.

We have recently seen, because of the outpouring of opposition to the Chinese Government's acquisition of a United States domestic oil producer, we have seen that deal unravel because of domestic pressure on not allowing the Chinese Government to take ownership of a domestic refinery operation.

Now, I hope the same outrage is expressed by our constituents in trying to figure out what is involved in this transaction. How can we bring to fruition, at least we hope, a termination of these engagements, and continue the

operation of the ports as they currently are conducted.

Again, they are the largest seaports in the United States on the eastern seaboard, including New Orleans, so the potential threat to our country is not imagined, but is real. We have heightened security, as I mentioned, at the airports. We are trying to heighten security at the seaports, but I believe we will be impeded if we do not look at this transaction.

It is not a foreign entity; it is a foreign government that seeks to have controlling interest in these six ports on the eastern seaboard. We again inquired of Secretary Snow yesterday. We inquired yesterday of Ambassador Portman. I hope some answers are forthcoming as to how they strategically thought through this transaction.

But it is my fervent hope that as we continue to debate and discuss this issue that the President again will use the authority granted to him by the Congress and intercede and not allow the transaction to take place.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. WYNN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WYNN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GOHMERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE NEED FOR STRAIGHT TALK ON NATIONAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, as I talk to my constituents, Democrats, Republicans and Independents alike, there is an increasing concern that the Bush administration is not talking straight to the American people on important issues of national security.

We know that during the lead-up to the war in Iraq, the intelligence community was put under pressure to come up with a certain view of the facts. And where we put ideology over facts, instead of having the facts shape our policy, it was the other way around.

We have now learned recently from a former CIA analyst, Paul Pillar, that not only did we play with the facts with respect to whether or not there were weapons of mass destruction and whether or not there were links between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein, but we also ignored many of the facts brought to us by some of the intelligence community with respect to the difficulties we would confront in Iraq in the case of a military invasion there.

And what happened, and he has laid this out very clearly, is the administration cherry-picked the information. They always took the rosy view of the facts as they presented us with their support of their case and tended to ignore those facts that did not support their case.

Now, whether you were for or against taking military action in Iraq, we should all be able to agree as Americans that it is important that we listen to those people who have experience, who have the professional know-how, people in our intelligence community who have spent years looking into issues around the world and in this case, issues with respect to the Middle East.

So I think it should concern all Americans that the administration decided to ignore warnings from non-partisan individuals who brought information to their attention. And it is not just the failure to take heed of that information. Now we are seeing the consequences in terms of the manpower in different intelligence agencies.

U.S. News and World Report has a story about how we are losing many of the most experienced people in the CIA as a result of the fact that they feel pressure to take a political position or that they are forced out of their positions. We are losing many of our most experienced people in the ranks of our intelligence community, and that certainly is not good for our national security.

We would have thought that after 9/11 we would have heeded some lessons, and in fact we formed a bipartisan 9/11 Commission that came out with a number of recommendations. One of their recommendations was to do more about the so-called "loose nukes," nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union.

Unfortunately, if you look at what has been done to date, it is very little. We are not doing what we should with

respect to the Nunn-Lugar program; and that is why if you look at the most recent report by the 9/11 Commission, they have given this administration and this Congress Ds and Fs, failing grades, in a whole range of categories, making it clear that we have not learned our lessons and that we are not more prepared.

In fact, we know we are not prepared because all we have to do is look at the government's response to Hurricane Katrina and the recent reports that have come out in the last couple of days showing the total failure of initiative by the Federal Government.

You know, a lot of people talk a good game about being prepared to deal with national security threats; but the fact of the matter is when you take the lid off and look underneath as to what is actually being done, the news is not good: more people leaving our intelligence agencies, the fact that we are continuing to get failing grades from the 9/11 Commission.

And just the other day in the Government Reform Committee, we had a hearing with a number of whistleblowers, all from national security agencies. These are people who have uncovered abuses within national security agencies, from the FBI to the NSA.

And instead of welcoming these individuals who have come forward to present the administration and the public with some truths, the testimony of these individuals, all under oath, sworn under oath, is that they are actually being punished for having come forward to try and tell the truth.

Now, again, I do not care what party affiliation you may have; it is not in the security interests of this country for us to punish people who come forward and tell the truth and reveal abuses that are going on within different national security agencies. That undermines our national security. That undermines our credibility as a government.

So I would just suggest that as we listen to a lot of the rhetoric from the administration, we remember that, unfortunately, this is the gang that cannot shoot straight with the American people. And in the last couple of days we have learned that that is not just figuratively true, it is also, unfortunately, actually true.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BALLOTS NOT BULLETS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms.